

Book Reviews

The Western Journal of Medicine does not review all books sent by publishers, although information about new books received is printed elsewhere in the journal as space permits. Prices quoted are those given by the publishers.

CHEST MEDICINE—Edited by Ronald B. George, MD, Louisiana State University Medical Center, Shreveport; Robert W. Light, MD, Veterans Administration Medical Center, Long Beach, California, and University of California, Irvine, and Richard A. Matthay, MD, Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, Conn. Churchill Livingstone Inc., 1560 Broadway, New York, NY 10036, 1983. 657 pages, \$49.50.

At a time when several new textbooks have appeared on chest diseases, this is yet another multiple author textbook on chest medicine. According to the authors, the book is designed for use by nursing and respiratory therapy students, as well as housestaff physicians and fellowship trainees in pulmonology and related fields.

The book is organized into three sections: pulmonary structure and function, collecting the data base and clinical patterns of lung disease. The first section deals primarily with physiological principles, is well-referenced and is succinct. Due to limitations imposed by the size of the book, some aspects are covered too briefly, but the references allow the reader to go to other appropriate sources for further details.

The second section on collecting the data base covers the basics of history and physical examination, chest radiology, clinical pulmonary function testing, exercise and disability evaluation, and other diagnostic techniques. Some aspects are dealt with in greater detail than others—computerized axial tomography gets a paragraph, while a radiograph of a barium swallow demonstrating an enlarged left atrium occupies half a page. As with the first section, the references are up to date and pertinent.

The third section of the book on clinical patterns of lung disease covers the expected areas of clinical lung diseases. This section, by virtue of its size, covers some areas in a sketchy fashion, but the ample references make up for these deficiencies.

In conclusion, the book is a good start for the student to be introduced to pulmonary diseases, and the references guide him to selected further reading. Persons more advanced in their training, such as pulmonary fellows, may have to go to the references to get a more detailed account of a specific topic.

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BASIC & CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY—Edited by Bertram C. Katzung, MD, PhD, Professor of Pharmacology, University of California, San Francisco. Lange Medical Publications, Drawer L, Los Altos, CA 94022, 1982. 815 pages, \$23.50.

Basic and Clinical Pharmacology, edited by Bertram G. Katzung, MD, PhD, is an entirely new textbook that is available in paperback form. This is one of the Lange Series books and supersedes the *Review of Medical Pharmacology*, by Frederick Meyers, Ernest Jawetz and Alan Goldfein. The book is by no means small (815 pages), but the chapters are concise and readable. This book is not meant to be an encyclopedia of pharmacology. For that, readers are referred to standard pharmacology texts.

Basically, I found the book to be very readable and appropriate to serve as a primary text for a number of pharmacology courses. It includes what many teachers would include in a lecture on certain types of drugs. It does not have the in-depth treatment that is necessary to pursue questions beyond those presented in a lecture or in this book.

Each chapter includes a section on clinical pharmacology of the specific agents that have already been discussed. This appears to be a somewhat artificial separation in that half-life and disposition are included in the "basic pharmacology" and not in the clinical pharmacology section. In general, the clinical pharmacology sections are not terribly useful. They are too brief to really guide therapy. In addition, some of the chapters have overlap in the basic and clinical pharmacology sections within the same chapter. For instance, the chapter discussing vasodilators and angina pectoris discusses the drugs twice and it is difficult to get an overall picture without flipping back and forth between the so-called basic and clinical pharmacology sections. In subsequent editions perhaps this organization should be reexamined.

Nonetheless, the book is an admirable attempt to present a concise and useful compendium of pharmacology. The contributing authors are as outstanding a group as has been assembled for a pharmacology textbook. This book looks like a winner and should be useful for medical students and students in other health professions such as nursing and pharmacy, and as a quick reference for housestaff and practicing physicians.

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PLATELETS: PATHOPHYSIOLOGY AND ANTIPLATELET DRUG THERAPY—Harvey J. Weiss, MD, Professor of Medicine, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University; Director, Division of Hematology-Oncology, St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center, New York. Alan R. Liss, Inc. 150 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011, 1982. 165 pages, \$22.00.

This slender volume of 165 pages devotes 55 of them to the reference list and index. That fully 25% of a book is devoted to a reference list, suggests that the author, a distinguished platelet researcher, wanted to document each statement with exquisite care. Although he has succeeded in doing so, it is at the expense of readability. The first 70-odd pages are devoted to a fundamental review of platelet physiology, biochemistry and the pharmacology of antiplatelet drugs. A great deal of material is covered, but in a dry, pedantic fashion. In all those pages, there are only six illustrations: one electron micrograph of a platelet, three rather elementary diagrams and two tables. The reader seeking to develop a clearer understanding of the participation of platelets in hemostasis of blood coagulation, or their interaction with the endothelium and its appurtenances, will have to dig it out of text. There is little sense of the dynamic, sequential series of events that occur, and that could be depicted well diagrammatically. Similarly, those seeking an overview of endoperoxide/prostaglandin biochemistry are forced to read rather than see the interrelationships. Even for the pharmacology of platelet inhibitors there is no diagram illustrating the site at which the various agents work. It is a matter of style, and Dr Weiss obviously prefers a descriptive rather than an illustrative approach.

The final section of 32 pages critically reviews a series of published studies dealing with the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of platelet inhibitors in cerebrovascular and cardiovascular disease. It also has brief paragraphs dealing with various other disorders (for example, thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura and venous thrombosis) for which these agents have been uti-

lized. This section may be useful to those seeking a concise yet critical review of these topics. Those who wish more detailed review can utilize the extensive reference list. Most of the references date from the 1970s and before, with 10% bearing a date of 1980 or later. That's par for the course in most hard-cover books.

For readers seeking a detailed, well-documented review of fundamental platelet physiology and biochemistry/pharmacology, it is here if one can devote the effort to heavy reading. Those seeking a less-detailed and more dynamic overview will find this book heavy going. Finally, those seeking clinical guidance will find the final section a useful but brief introduction to the state of the art. For specific guidance on clinical problems, there is little help here. If you wish to know the value of measuring circulating platelet aggregates, for example, it is mentioned, but there is no critical discussion. Or if you want information on heparin thrombocytopenia, it too is mentioned, but with only a single reference (the book's reference number 460, and that paper does *not* deal with heparin-induced thrombocytopenia, but with *in vitro* heparin induced platelet aggregation).

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NEUROLOGY FOR NON-NEUROLOGISTS—Edited by Wigbert C. Wiederholt, MD, Department of Neurosciences, School of Medicine, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, Calif. Academic Press, Inc., 111 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003, 1982. 400 pages, \$37.50.

This concise textbook provides an excellent introduction to the field for medical students as well as a useful guide for general physicians interested in a variety of neurological topics. The multi-authored volume includes chapters dealing with the neurological history and examination of both adult and pediatric patients. There is a section devoted to laboratory studies in neurological disease. This includes chapters on lumbar puncture, spinal fluid examination, electromyography, electroencephalography, evoked potentials, neuroradiology and neuropsychological testing. The remainder of the book deals with specific neurological disorders including headache, stroke, dementia, demyelinating disorders, motor system diseases, the metabolic encephalopathies, the myopathies, neuropathies, seizures, Parkinson's Disease, infections, dizziness and vertigo, congenital anomalies, hereditary disorders, learning disability, tumors, cranial and spinal trauma and radiculopathies. A large number of useful tables have been included. The bibliographies in each chapter are terse. With 11 individual authors, the writing of the book is somewhat uneven; however, the authors have assembled a very useful, practical guide to the field for the nonspecialist.

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MYOCARDIAL INFARCTION—ITS PRESENTATION, PATHOGENESIS AND TREATMENT—Robin M. Norris, MB, ChB(NZ), MD(Birm), FRCP(Lond), FRACP, Physician in Charge, Coronary Care Unit, Green Lane Hospital, Auckland, New Zealand, and Honorary Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacology and Clinical Pharmacology, School of Medicine, University of Auckland, Churchill Livingstone, Inc., 1560 Broadway, New York, NY 10036, 1982. 316 pages, \$49.00.

The monograph contains 27 chapters with the text being divided into three parts. Part I is titled "Natural History of Myocardial Infarction" and contains 13 chapters ranging from coronary risk factors to electrocardiogram cardiac enzymes and radionuclide scanning in myocardial infarction. Part II contains six chapters dealing with the treatment of myocardial infarction and Part III has several chapters on the experimental models of infarction and their applicability to clinical practice.

The majority of the chapters have been written by Dr Norris alone or in coauthorship with others. The chapters are well organized, brief, to-the-point and well referenced; the most

recent references are 1980. The chapters on clinical presentations, disorders of cardiac function during and after infarction, arrhythmias in acute myocardial infarction, conduction disturbances due to infarction, complications of myocardial infarction and prognosis after myocardial infarction are very well presented. The chapter on acute coronary care outlines the concepts of immediate care and the management of arrhythmias.

The first two parts of the book are clinically oriented and provide readers with considerable amounts of information on the pathophysiology and natural history of myocardial infarction and should be valuable to internists with responsibility for treating patients with acute myocardial infarction. Also, there is valuable information for practicing cardiologists.

One apparent weakness of the book lies in the lack of adequate emphasis on the pharmacology and pharmacokinetics of various drugs used in acute myocardial infarction, although a reasonable review is presented in Chapter 16 titled "Treatment for Complications of Infarction." Also a chapter each on anticoagulant, antithrombotic and antiplatelet drugs in myocardial infarction and one on the place of cardiac surgery in myocardial infarction is included. A detailed mention of the role of thrombolytic therapy and the use of percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty in acute myocardial infarction would have enhanced the text.

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CLINICAL ETHICS: A Practical Approach to Ethical Decisions in Clinical Medicine—Albert R. Jonsen, PhD, Professor of Ethics in Medicine, Department of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco; Mark Siegler, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, Section of General Internal Medicine, Pritzker School of Medicine, University of Chicago; and William J. Winslade, PhD, JD, Co-Director, Program in Medicine, Law and Human Values, Adjunct Professor of Law, School of Law, and Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry, UCLA School of Medicine, Los Angeles. Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022, 1982. 187 pages, \$18.00.

This small volume is one of those rare medical texts that deserves to be read from cover to cover as well as for reference. The initial reading, which can be accomplished in just a few hours, is enjoyable because the book systematically analyzes and clarifies many of the gray areas in the patient-physician encounter that in many ways cause the physician more stress than do decisions about purely clinical problems. It is a useful guide for physicians who have to make judgments. The major headings are (1) indications for medical intervention, (2) preference of patients, (3) quality of life and (4) external factors. The book is particularly helpful on questions involving prolonging of life, specifically on orders not to resuscitate, and on autonomy of the patient, truthful disclosure and use of placebos.

Uniformly excellent and brief clinical case presentations are followed by a discussion "comment" and finally by "counsel" in which the three authors—a professor of ethics, a physician and an attorney—give their carefully weighed opinions. The book identifies three types of encounters: acute life-threatening disorders, chronic lethal disease and chronic debilitating disease; it meticulously dissects the specific problems that each of these situations entail. The authors do not hesitate to acknowledge the occasional dilemma, when no easy answer is available; for instance, in the area of confidentiality. They sometimes suggest that some particularly difficult questions cannot be solved either by physician or patient but may require an outside review committee's help. In a general way the authors stress the need to elicit the patient's preference and inclinations. Although a special chapter is devoted to external factors, most decisions are in the hands of the physician and the patient; patient's relatives have rather little authority.

The book certainly belongs in every internist's office, especially those subspecialists who see many dying patients. It would grace any morning report session, and might be particularly helpful to chairmen of departments of medicine, to remind everybody that decision-making involves many personal considerations in addition to hard medical facts.

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